

JULY 4TH PLANNER – DESIGNATED DRIVER  
SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Date]  
CONTACT: [Name, Phone Number, Email]



**Fourth of July – Top Holiday for Impaired Driving**  
*Officials Remind Everyone to Designate a Sober Driver*

[Local Leader/Organization] announced today they are joining with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and other highway safety and law enforcement officials across the nation to aggressively remind anyone planning on using alcohol during the Fourth of July weekend to always *Plan Before You Party – Don't Forget to Designate a Sober Driver*.

“The Fourth of July holiday period represents the deadliest time of the year on America’s roadways for impaired driving,” said [Local Leader]. “Our goal is a safe and fun holiday for family and friends. We’re reminding anyone planning to drink alcohol to designate a sober driver before they celebrate.

According to NHTSA, the Fourth of July holiday period has the highest incidence of impaired-driving crashes and fatalities for the entire year. Nearly 47 percent of the 514 traffic fatalities across the country on and around the Fourth of July in 2003 involved an impaired driver with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level of 0.08 grams per deciliter or higher, according to NHTSA. Every state has enacted a law making it illegal to drive with a BAC of 0.08 or above.

“There is no reason anyone should ever drive impaired. If anyone finds themselves without a safe ride home, we’re also working with [ORGANIZATIONS] to offer sober rides for adults 21 years of age and older from [DATES & TIMES]. To get more information about receiving a free ride home please call [NUMBER],” [Local Leader] said.

[He/she] also offered the following tips for a safe holiday:

- Designate your sober driver before going out.
- If you’re drinking alcohol, don’t even think about driving when impaired – and never let your friends drive if you think they are impaired; remember, *Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk*.

- Don't drink alcohol "on an empty stomach," and drink lots of water during your activities to keep hydrated.
- When impaired, ask a sober friend for a ride home, use mass transit, call a cab or your local sober rides program, **(if your community has a local sober rides program, insert the information and phone number here)**.
- Ask a friend or family member to come get you, or just stay where you are and sleep it off until you are sober.
- And, of course, always remember to wear your safety belt. It is still your single best defense against death or injury in a crash.

According to a study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety of all motor vehicle fatalities in the United States between 1986 and 2002, July 3<sup>rd</sup> and July 4<sup>th</sup> are the two deadliest days of the year on our highways – with approximately 41 percent of the traffic fatalities involving an impaired driver with a blood alcohol concentration level of 0.08 grams per deciliter or higher.

As one point of comparison, four people died in America from injuries involving the use of fireworks around July 4<sup>th</sup> in 2003, according to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, while on the same day, 282 people died from alcohol-related traffic crashes.

Impaired driving is one of America's deadliest problems. Nationally, more than 14,000 people died in impaired-driving-related highway crashes during 2003 involving a driver with a BAC level of 0.08 or higher. Every 30 minutes, nearly 50 times a day, someone in America dies in an alcohol-related crash. Hundreds of thousands more are injured each year. According to NHTSA, about three in every ten Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some point in their lives.

Driving impaired or riding with someone who is impaired is simply not worth the risk because the consequences are serious and real. Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for driving while impaired can be really significant.

"Driving impaired is simply not worth any of the pain you can cause yourself or someone else," said **[Local Leader]**. "Please remember to *Plan Before You Party This Fourth of July – Don't Forget to Designate a Sober Driver.*"

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